

Interagency Group/Countermeasures

Washington, D.C. 20505

10 FEB 1986

MEMORANDUM FOR THE CHAIRMAN, SENIOR INTERAGENCY GROUP/INTELLIGENCE

SUBJECT: Alternative Executive Policy Statement

Since the SIG-I apparatus was established in 1982, the only form in which executive branch policy within our jurisdiction has been promulgated has been the National Security Decision Directive (NSDD), signed by the President.

As a practical matter, this has meant that certain policy issuances prepared by, and transmitted through, the SIG-I apparatus have languished at the NSC level for long periods, because they did not appear, at least initially, to rise to the level of Presidential decisionmaking (e.g., foreign ownership; security awareness; reporting hostile contacts; the civil overflight security program; and operations security). I do not quarrel with this, per se; indeed, it seems clear certain of these proposals are not sufficiently important to warrant Presidential attention or action. They do, however, require action by an authoritative executive branch official inasmuch as they affect many departments and agencies.


My predecessor, General Stilwell, attempted unsuccessfully some months ago to resolve this with Ken deGraffenreid and Bob Kimmitt, suggesting to them that the President's National Security Advisor be authorized to sign out executive branch policy issuances which required action by the White House but did not rise to the level of the President. No action was taken on this suggestion.

I continue, with support of the IG/CM, to see the need for such an alternative issuance if the SIG-I system is to provide a workable policy mechanism. Indeed, the lack of such an alternative poses a serious practical obstacle to the effectiveness of the system.

There is considerable precedent in previous administrations for the Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs to sign policy memoranda applicable to departments and agencies of the executive branch. Speaking for the Defense Department at least, such memoranda were treated as seriously and authoritatively as those signed by the President.

We also continue to have doubts expressed by the Congressional intelligence committees that the SIG-I apparatus is effective. This would be, in the view of the IG/CM, one positive action which could be taken to improve our performance.

The IG/CM thus urges you to raise with Admiral Poindexter the desirability of an alternative form of policy issuance which he, rather than the President, could sign. These sorts of issuances might be limited to those which affect some, but not all, departments and agencies, or which are limited in scope and impact upon executive branch activities. An element of judgment will necessarily be involved in deciding which form may be appropriate, but I submit it will ordinarily not be difficult to determine. I have attached a draft memorandum from you to Admiral Poindexter for this purpose which I recommend that you raise with him personally.

  
Craig Alderman, Jr.  
Chairman

Attachment